



August 27, 2007
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LSU SYSTEM NAMES DR. CERISE HEALTH CARE VICE PRESIDENT

BATON ROUGE--Dr. Fred Cerise, who led the drive to redesign health care as Louisiana's Secretary of Health and Hospitals, today was named Louisiana State University System Vice President for Health Care and Medical Education.

LSU System President Dr. William L. Jenkins announced Dr. Cerise's appointment to the newly created post, providing operational oversight for the LSU Health Care Service Division, which operates eight public hospitals, and LSU Health Science Centers in New Orleans and Shreveport. LSUHSC-Shreveport manages an additional three hospitals in Shreveport, Monroe, and Pineville.

"Dr. Cerise brings a wealth of expertise to his new position at LSU," said Dr. William L. Jenkins, LSU System President. "As an educator, administrator at one of Louisiana's major public hospitals, and as Secretary of Health and Hospitals, he demonstrated a passion for public health care. He understands the issues, the finances,

and the compelling human dynamics of caring for people. More importantly, he is devoted to LSU's critical twin missions of educating future health care professionals while caring for the uninsured and underinsured.”

“I am very pleased to accept this new challenge with LSU to lead the university’s efforts to improve and strengthen the school’s academic and medical missions,” said Dr. Cerise. “I am excited by the opportunity to continue on the path to improve how our state cares for its poorest citizens, while providing educational excellence for our future doctors.”

As DHH secretary, Dr. Cerise, who personally helped triage and evacuate hospital patients from New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina, was Governor Kathleen Blanco’s point person for health care reform, chairing the Health Care Redesign Collaborative where he pressed for an incremental yet substantial overhaul of Louisiana’s long-term care system. Before becoming state health secretary in 2004, Dr. Cerise was chief executive officer of the Earl K. Long Medical Center in Baton Rouge, which is operated by LSU.

Dr. Cerise, administrator of a department with a \$6 billion annual budget, emphasized primary and preventive care in reducing demand for services at the state’s public hospital emergency rooms and safety net clinics by creating a new health-care delivery system based on a "medical home" model in which clinics and physicians would provide basic care with patient referrals, if necessary, to an electronically interconnected system of hospitals and physician specialists.

His efforts to improve medical care for children and pregnant women drew praise from national health care advocacy groups such as Public Citizen, Families USA, the Kaiser

Family Foundation, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation that applauded Louisiana's success in reducing the number of uninsured children in the state.

Cerise added he is confident that the reform and redesign efforts underway at the Department of Health and Hospitals will continue, "But, it is also with a sense of sadness that I move from DHH. I thank the entire staff at the agency for their unbelievable talents, desires and work ethic as we worked tirelessly to improve health care in the state," he said.

"I thank Fred for his years of service to the people of Louisiana," Governor Blanco said. "His leadership after Katrina to restore vital health care services to the region, his vision to transform and improve Louisiana's health care delivery system and his dedication to excellence have guided our public health system. I wish him the best as he continues these efforts through the LSU system."

A native of Monroe and reared in New Orleans, Dr. Cerise, 45, received a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Notre Dame in 1984 and a medical degree from the Louisiana State University School of Medicine in New Orleans in 1988. He completed both his internship and residency in internal medicine at the University of Alabama Medical Center in Birmingham in 1991 and was awarded a Master's degree in Public Health from Harvard University in 2001.

Prior to being appointed Secretary of Health and Hospitals by Governor Blanco in January 2004, Dr. Cerise spent 13 years as a physician in the state's public hospital system.

As LSU's new health care vice president, Dr. Cerise will lead efforts to build new LSU academic medical centers in New Orleans and Baton Rouge. Land acquisition and planning for the New Orleans hospital is underway. In addition, the Legislature has

approved \$225.5 million as a down payment for construction of the \$1.2 billion facility adjacent to a proposed veterans hospital. When completed, the joint LSU/VA medical center is expected to form the nucleus of a medical district, providing state-of-the-art health care and research.

The LSU Board of Supervisors in March approved creation of the health care vice president's position as well as six other system-level health-care positions, including specialists in finance, information technology, quality management and research, health care legal issues, and system compliance.

Dr. Cerise and his wife Shannon, have three children: Paul, 11, Caroline, 10, and Jake, 7.

For further information, contact Dr. Charles Zewe, LSU System Vice President for Communications and External Affairs, 225-578-3941 or 504-251-5400 (czewe@lsu.edu).